

RUSSIA INVADES UKRAINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS. Mr. Speaker, as background, I have served on the House Committee on Armed Services for 11 years and on the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

There is an old saying: Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

The lesson from Vietnam is that war is hell. If America is unwilling to do horrible things required to win a war, then America should not fight it. Be all in or all out.

A World War II lesson is that Europe's pre-war appeasement strategy does not work against aggressor nations. In the 1930s, Adolf Hitler and his National Socialist German Workers' Party time and again seized more and more of Europe. Beginning in 1935, Adolf Hitler and dictatorial socialist Germany annexed the Saarland; invaded and seized Austria in the Anschluss; seized the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia; seized the Slovak state Bohemia and Moravia; and forced Lithuania into ceding the Memel Territory.

In response each time, Europe and the free world tried appeasement and did little to nothing, thereby emboldening Adolf Hitler and dictatorial socialist Germany.

The result? Hitler and Germany invaded Poland, triggering the Holocaust and the deaths of tens of millions of people in World War II.

The question is: Has the world learned from history?

In 2014, Vladimir Putin and Russia invaded Crimea. The free world did little to nothing.

Also in 2014, Vladimir Putin and Russia inspired a rebellion in Donetsk and Lugansk in Ukraine, costing thousands of lives and creating hundreds of thousands of desperate refugees. The free world did little to nothing.

Last month, Russia invaded Ukraine again, apparently seeking the total destruction and conquest of Ukraine. I admire the bravery and kindred spirit of citizens who fight and die for liberty and freedom against overwhelming odds.

They remind me of American Revolutionary War heroes like George Washington and Patrick Henry and places like Valley Forge, Cowpens, Kings Mountain, and Saratoga.

Fortunately, something is different about this Russian attack on Ukraine. This time, the world does not do nothing. This time, the free world is helping Ukraine during their time of peril. This time, time will tell whether the world's help is enough and effective.

First, Europe and America impose economic sanctions on Russia. In that vein, we must learn from Vietnam. Economic sanctions must be all in or all out. There can be no half measures. America must be in this to win or not be in it at all.

Second, Europe and America must be, and are, supplying Ukraine with much-needed tank-killing Javelins, aircraft-destroying Stingers, advanced fighter jets to replace those lost in combat, and other military equipment Ukraine desperately needs.

Third, Europe must decide whether to deploy combat troops. For emphasis, it is my view that America should not even consider providing combat troops in Ukraine unless Europe first does so in significant numbers. Even then, whatever America decides about troop assistance should never go beyond assistance to our European allies.

I, like many Americans, am tired of America spending our Treasury and our lives in so many parts of the globe. It is time for the rest of the free world to step up.

Ukrainians bravely shed themselves of the dictatorial boot in 1991. Russians can, and should, do the same.

My message to the Russian people is this: Your Russian comrades fought side by side with you in World War II against Adolf Hitler and dictatorial socialist Germany. Now, Vladimir Putin forces you to kill each other and die by the thousands in Ukraine. It does not have to be this way. The true way to peace is to do what America regularly does: replace our political leaders.

I urge freedom-loving Russians to bravely stand up and do the same. Do what is necessary to get the leadership Russians want and deserve, and do it before it is too late. That is the lesson of World War II.

USVI HISTORY MONTH: THEME OF FIRSTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, let me start by saying that I am a proud Virgin Islander. I stand on the shoulders of strong Virgin Islanders who came before me and who are known for their courage, leadership, sacrifice, and, most importantly, their resilience. We are known for so much more than just white sandy beaches and as a popular vacation destination. We are made of culture-rich lands and a diverse history.

March is Virgin Islands History Month. Though not always pretty, there is great beauty in our past that has shaped the Virgin Islands of our present. Like most Caribbean countries, the Virgin Islands' history, too, begins with the story of pre-Columbian inhabitants of the islands and of slavery.

Almost 3,000 years prior to Christopher Columbus landing in 1493, Native American tribes, such as the Ciboney, the Caribs, and the Arawak Indians, have long inhabited the islands.

In 1493, when Columbus attempted to land on the island that I live on, St. Croix, he was repelled at Salt River,

where he met the Carib Indians who kept him and his troops from landing and making landfall there.

The period of Columbus' visit ultimately set the course for seven other European flags to claim the Virgin Islands and, unfortunately, brought demise to the indigenous people.

Today, they are found on reserved lands, and only for a few islands, and no longer exist in the Virgin Islands.

Much of our global history was built upon slavery and colonization, especially in the Caribbean islands. By the early 1700s, the Virgin Islands was no stranger to enslavement and European colonization.

On the island of St. John, a Ghanaian by the name of Breffu is credited with leading the first and one of the longest-lasting rebellions in the Americas on the island of St. John. She empowered more than 150 enslaved Africans to fight for their freedom and held that island for over 6 months, where the Danes had to bring in the Spanish Armada and the French fleet to get the slaves back in line.

Several years, almost a century, later, in 1848 on the island of St. Croix, slaves led a rebellion, an armed insurrection, which led to the emancipation—15 years before the United States emancipation. The Virgin Islands and Haiti are the only two places to gain freedom through violent overthrow.

The celebration of V.I. Emancipation Day on July 3 marks this day. Virgin Islands' history does not end with just the bleak stories of European colonialism and forced slavery. We have so many celebrated heroes, from individuals who were the founders of San Francisco; Denmark Vesey, who led the rebellion in South Carolina; Hubert Harrison, the great socialist mind who was the thought leader for Marcus Garvey; Edward Wilmoth Blyden, who was the founder of Pan-Africanism; Nella Larsen, one of the Harlem Renaissance writers; Ruby Rouss, who was an aide-de-camp to Eisenhower; Sam Ebbesen, a general and friend of Colin Powell.

Without that history and those individuals, we would not be the Virgin Islands we are today, which I am proud to represent and call my home and my heritage.

Throughout the month of March, let us celebrate our heritage and our history and look to our future.

Happy Virgin Islands History Month.

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HONORING CAROL MCBRIDE PIRSCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Women's History Month and to honor Carol McBride Pirsch, who served 18 years in the Nebraska State legislature, and 8 years on the Douglas County Board of

Commissioners. Through her various roles in Omaha, she has dedicated her time and service to bettering our community.

As an Omaha native, she attended Beals Grade School, Central High School, and the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

One of only three women in the 49 member Nebraska Unicameral, Carol's most notable accomplishments include protecting and informing victims of crime by providing guidance and support to pass the Crime Victims Bill of Rights and the Truth in Sentencing bills.

In 1984 she was the first president of the Nebraska Coalition for Victims of Crime, an organization that established an ongoing statewide coalition for victims of crime, and a fund to establish victim/witness centers in Nebraska.

She also worked to protect homeowners with legislation that prohibited a lien from being placed on a home if contractors failed to pay sub-contractors for their work.

Carol valued the relationships she made while in office and believed most representatives were accessible, respectful, and willing to discuss issues. In the nonpartisan Nebraska Unicameral, she worked together to find solutions and pass bills that would benefit Nebraska statewide.

Active in her community, she was a member of the Omaha Community Committee, the Juvenile Court Nominating Commission, the Mayor's Commission of the Status of Women, Omaha Jaycees, several parent-teacher associations, many women's civic organizations, and the Centris Federal Credit Union Board. She was also involved in the Order of Women Legislators, the Omaha Area Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, the YWCA, the Omaha Library Board, the Developmental Disabilities Council, the Women in Management Association, and the Nebraska Coalition for Victims of Crime. She did it all.

Although retired, Carol has encouraged many to get involved and feels that even if you have retired or are not in public service there are many roles and ways to serve our community.

But above all else, Carol believes her greatest accomplishment is raising her six children alongside her husband Allen, whom she married in 1954. They all earned bachelor's degrees and have additional education certifications and degrees because of the importance placed on education in their family.

Mr. Speaker, I cherish Carol's friendship and I treasure the wisdom she has shared with me and others. I admire this wonderful lady, this great American patriot.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GARCIA) for 5 minutes.

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate President

Biden and the significant accomplishments he shared with us during last night's State of the Union address.

Last year, together with President Biden, we made a promise that Democrats would deliver for the people; and that we have. Thanks to our President's bold leadership and our work in Congress, we have been delivering. Let's look at a few areas.

Jobs, jobs, and more jobs. As was mentioned last night by President Biden, in his first year, 6.7 million jobs were created, marking the strongest year of job growth in history. In my home State of Texas alone more than 37,600 manufacturing jobs were created. These are good, well-paying jobs that are putting Texans back to work. Our economy is on the rise. Wages are strong. The unemployment rate is low.

Another area is our Nation's GDP. While GDP dropped 3.4 percent in 2020, it was able to shoot up to 5.7 percent in 2021—the highest rate since 1984. Simply put, the economy has rebounded during President Biden's first year in office.

Another very important area to all our working families is our public schools. I am proud of the significant progress that has been made in our public schools during the President's first year. We have made huge strides in reopening our schools and keeping them open safely.

One year ago, Mr. Speaker, merely 46 percent of schools were open because it just wasn't safe for teachers, students, and faculty due to COVID. Today, 99.9 percent of schools are safely opened. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act as well as the American Rescue Plan both provided schools the necessary funds they needed to stay open and make up for lost learning time.

Another very crucial area, vaccination rates. One year ago today, only 15 percent of the U.S. population was fully vaccinated against COVID-19, today that number is 65 percent. The massive increase in vaccinations is the direct result of the President and this Congress' leadership to tackle this virus. Even today we do not have to wear our masks this morning.

Let's look ahead. Action from the Biden administration and Congress has already resulted in significant progress on the supply chain challenges. The bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will improve and protect supply chains and reduce reliance on foreign oil immensely for years to come. It will help lower costs and inflation rates with time. As President Biden said last night, the plan is to lower your costs, not your wages.

There is a lot more President Biden and Democrats are working on in building a better America, like investments in affordable childcare and paid and universal pre-K that would allow more working families to participate in the economy.

It is those very workers and everyday hardworking Americans who deserve the greatest praise of all.

Our hometown heroes have braved through this pandemic and powered through many challenges. They have been the muscle and the backbone of our Nation's record-breaking economic growth and recovery from the pandemic and we thank them.

With President Biden's leadership, Congress' partnership, and the support of the American people, there is truly no limit as to what we can achieve together in building a better America.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the people of Ukraine that we stand with them. I stand with them. "Yes, we can," "sí se puede." I want the people of Ukraine to know that we see you, we hear you, and we love you. And Russia, who has purposely invaded your homeland has been—well, I should not say the word I really want to say on the floor—but they have been inhumane, cruel, and just beyond the pale. We will not stand for this.

We will stand with Ukraine. Again, "yes, we can," "sí se puede." We stand with you.

TRIBUTE TO AL GLICK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to my good friend, Al Glick, who recently passed away at the age of 95. Very few have meant as much to the Jackson, Michigan, community as Al Glick.

Alro Steel, a company founded nearly 75 years ago, embodies the hardworking ethos of his hometown. Over the years, under Al's leadership, the company grew to 3,000 employees in over a dozen States. Al always exhibited a tireless work ethic but spent the time to talk to and to know each of his employees. When asked about his retirement, he said: "I have slowed down to working part-time, I only work 12 hours a day." Even still, he always found time to get involved in just about every effort under the sun.

Al supported skilled education programs, nonprofits, and C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, just to name a few. Name a sport and Al likely sponsored a team or league in the Jackson area. Al's generosity was felt throughout the Jackson community, often taking shape through his unwavering support of Jackson High School.

A Michigan man through and through, Al got to see his beloved Wolverines take down Ohio State on a snowy day this past November and then win the Big Ten Championship.

Al wasn't just a staple of the Jackson community; he was a steel pillar.

While we mourn Al's passing, we celebrate his remarkable life and the legacy that will live on for generations to come. We wish his family great joy in that legacy and thank them for sharing Al with us.